

GRIEVING WELL

Addressing Grief and Depression

FOR CLERGY & LEADERS

Webinar featuring
Joselyn Spence, LPC
and Rev. Rae Karim

Wed. Oct. 20, 2021, 1pm ET



National
Benevolent
Association



What is depression?

Depression, otherwise known as major depressive disorder or clinical depression, is a common and serious mood disorder. Those who suffer from depression experience persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness and lose interest in activities they once enjoyed.

Depression is one of the most common mental disorders in the U.S. Current research suggests that depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental, and psychological factors.

How it may present

- "Feeling the blues"
- Trouble sleeping
- Lack of energy
- Fatigue
- Trouble concentrating or remembering
- Loss of appetite
- Aches and pains that don't go away

Differences Between Sadness and Depression

Sadness is usually temporary; depression requires assistance, medication and support. It can be chronic in nature.

Sadness is often connected to a life change, something negative, but depression can rear its ugly head whenever it wants.

Sadness is usually without feelings of suicide; depression can be accompanied by suicidal idealization.

Sadness affects a person's ability to take care of themselves less; depression and the impact on energy, sleep, appetite and general well-being is dramatically altered.



DSM-5 Criteria for Depression

- Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day.
- Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day.
- Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain, or decrease or increase in appetite nearly every day.
- A slowing down of thought and a reduction of physical movement (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down).
- Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.
- Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt nearly every day.
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day.
- Recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide.

for diagnosis, must experience five or more symptoms during the same 2-week period and at least one of the symptoms should be either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.

Risk Factors

- **Biochemistry:** Differences in certain chemicals in the brain may contribute to symptoms of depression.
- **Genetics:** Depression can run in families. For example, if one identical twin has depression, the other has a 70 percent chance of having the illness sometime in life.
- **Personality:** People with low self-esteem, who are easily overwhelmed by stress, or who are generally pessimistic appear to be more likely to experience depression.
- **Environmental factors:** Continuous exposure to violence, neglect, abuse or poverty may make some people more vulnerable to depression.

Ways to Treat

- Therapy
- Medication: Anti-Depressants
- Try to be active and exercise.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- Try to spend time with other people and confide in a trusted friend or relative.
- Try not to isolate yourself, and let others help you.
- Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately.
- If possible, postpone important decisions, such as getting married or divorced, or changing jobs until you feel better. Discuss decisions with others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation.
- Continue to educate yourself about depression.

Best way to address grief...



Acknowledge it!

What is grief?

Why grieve?

How do we grieve well?



What is grief?

The natural, normal response to loss, change & transition that results in the expression of feelings and emotions

Loss: People. Positions. Possessions. Pets. Possibilities...

Change: Health. Finances. Relationships.

Transition: COVID effects: congregational, pastoral, ministerial

What is grief?

a journey, not a destination...

YOUR journey...won't be like anyone else's

an experience, that no one can avoid

What is grief?

an experience, no one can avoid

Even Jesus grieved:

- John 11:35
- Matthew 26:38
- Mark 15:34



Why grieve?

Because we:
cared, loved, lost...
things changed...
we exist...

Why Grieve?

Gives others permission to do the same

Increases relatability - same page; playing field

Prevents mental/emotional/spiritual constipation

Why Grieve?

Engages self-care

Your present & future depend on it

Acknowledge 5ws, 1h of feelings

Avoid avoidance

Make room for support

How to Grieve Well

Express what you feel

Share what you feel

How to Grieve Well

How to Grieve Well

Be kind to and gracious with yourself

Do not be afraid of what you feel

Do not isolate





Grieve well,
so you can be well

Q & A

